Available online at www.sciencedirect.com
ScienceDirect
Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences 15 (2011) 1531–1534
Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences

WCES-2011

Participatory management opportunity for optimizing in agricultural extension education

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Abstract

This study refines the participatory management (PM) in agricultural extension education (AEE) by adopting a multidimensional approach. PM is a process where extension agent (EA) tries to provide a good situation for AEE and share significant degree of power with their farmers. The data were obtained from samples of 290 Iranian farmers in Torbat Heydarieh, Iran. Methodology was descriptive and correlation. There was directly and a statically significant relation between all of components of PM regarding in effective AEE. The PM is a panacea for improving the AEE. Findings confirm the application of PM for achieving suitable strategy to AEE.

Keywords: Participatory management, agricultural extension education, extension agent;

1. Introduction

Technology transfer is the application of information into use. It is clearly a mission and training certainly is an integral part of technology transfer. On the other hand, extension education (EE) is an applied behavioral science, the knowledge of which is applied to bring about suitable changes in the behavioral complex of human beings usually through different strategies and schemes of change and by applying the latest scientific innovation. The EE has now developed as a full-fledged discipline, having its own philosophy, objectives, principles, methods and techniques which must be understood by every extension agent (EA) with the rural development. Agricultural extension education (AEE) is about putting useful knowledge to study. In this case, technology transfer is an educational process orchestrated by extension agents through both formal and informal means (Blackburn and Flaherty, 1994; Rogers, 1995 Tiraieyari et al., 2010).

Participatory management (PM) is better suited for today's AEE. It empowers farmers to better decision. Extension agents today are more educated, motivated, responsible, and capable of doing their jobs and they are willing to implement participatory management in AEE. Participatory management is a process where EA shares significant degree of decision making power with their farmers. PM is something more than putting individuals in groups. The improvement of the individuals' skills is also taken into consideration in addition to getting them involved in the group activities. Participation is dependent of the mental involvement of the individuals and not their

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doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.03.325

physical presence. It is clear that is the EA manages to form groups with farmers of different potentials; the result will be much more profitable. The AEE is relating to improved seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, improved cultural practices, dairying, etc. Therefore, it has known as a practical application of useful knowledge to farm and at last, to improve all faces of the life of the rural people within the framework of the national (Muhs, 1982; Glosser, 2001; Ming, 2004).

2. Statement of problem

The movement of technology from lab to the field has been a significant challenge for agricultural extension agents. It can be concluded that performance of extension agents is expected to increase if they have program development competencies. Extension agents perceived themselves competent in program planning, program implementation and program evaluation. In addition, it has reported that competencies are factors that provide to high levels of individual and organizational performance. Over the years, the EA has tried to empower their farmers to varying degrees. The EA skilfully controls the components of the learning situation. It provides satisfactory learning experiences for the farmers or other peoples. The farmers are the focal points in the learning situation. The main aim of an EA is to bring about a change in this behavior of the people with the help of a judicious combination and use of different components. Therefore, all the teaching should be carried out according to the needs and resources of the local community or group (Gono, 2001; Armstrong, 2006; Tiraieyari et al., 2010).

Participatory management (PM) has been long acknowledged as an essential ingredient in the quest for better AEE. In characterizing successful AEE, researchers commonly list factors, which include collaborative, planning, flexibility and participation. Furthermore, high levels of farmers' involvement and support, collaborative, planning, flexibility are effective characteristics that justify the implementation of PM. In fact, efforts to enhance AEE have featured PM. The PM is particularly well suited to increase farmers' creativity, interest and intrinsic motivation for stronger affiliation with AEE. Conversion into a PM is seen as a way for EA to build key capabilities essential for success in the complicated and dynamic contemporary AEE (Golarz and Golarz, 1995; Cheng and Cheung, 2003; Marzano, 2003).

There are various reasons for participation, ranging from merely obeying legal regulations regarding the input of knowledge into the process to considering participation a human right or a necessary element of ethically good behavior. Finally, researchers have found that the PM may positively impact job satisfaction (Kim, 2002; Robert, 2000), commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Mowday, 1999; Spence-Laschinger et al., 2004), and perceived support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; VanYperen et al., 1999; Lau & Lim, 2002), and job performance (Lau & Lim, 2002; Ming, 2004). Khalil et al. (2008) reported that program evaluation is one of the predictors of agricultural extension agents' job performance.

With the assumption that the farmers have attained working and mental maturity, this research attempts to define PM according to the following specifications:

2.1. Trying to provide good condition for PM

2.2. Supporting of PM

2.3. Considering values of PM

Participatory management is ideal for the profit oriented and all the EA should adopt this system. Clearly, the changes involved may be painful and long-winded, but it is necessary if one is to achieve the maximum rewards for farmers. According to Thompson (2003) the relationship between PM provides strong evidence of the importance and influence of such factors in the workplace. For example, issues regarding self fulfilment, recognition, morale, respect, and the quality of relationships, commitment, and trust. Participatory management where provide environments conducive to productive, innovative and satisfied extension agent and farmers. This study has focused on the PM as multi dimensional approach. The purpose of study is to examine this hypothesis that PM have been employed more, and is there directly and a statistically significant relation between all of components?

3. Methodology

The population for the study consisted of 290 farmers in Torbat Heydarieh, Iran. A random sample was used for the study. Researchers were used questionnaire to collect data PM that were measured on a Likert-type scale. The scales for PM ranged from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. The reliability is based on CronBach alpha was estimated over 90% by SPSS analysis. Methodology of this study was descriptive and correlation. Therefore, as the result of data analysis, person's product moment correlation was used.

4. Findings

After considering, the different dimensions of participatory management (PM), it is clear that correlation between the three diminutions of the PM more than 0.70 and the results also show that considering values of Participatory management and trying to provide good condition for PM had high correlation value. The correlation coefficient between the two dimensions such as trying to provide good condition for PM and supporting of PM were $r = 0.68^{*}$ which is considered as moderate correlation. The level of coefficient was calculated 0.01. The correlation coefficient between the two dimensions such as trying to provide good condition for PM and considering values of PM were $r = 0.79^{*}$ which is considered as strong correlation. The level of coefficient was calculated 0.01. The correlation coefficient between the two dimensions such as supporting of participatory management and considering values of PM were $r = 0.66^{*}$ which is considered as moderate correlation. The level of coefficient was calculated 0.01. On the other hand, according to farmers' opinion, it is noticeable that the dimensions have been highlighted by extension agent (EA), are as follows:

4.1. Trying to provide good condition for PM 75.5%
4.2. Considering values of PM 71.4%
4.3. Supporting of PM 66.6%

The results showed there is relationship between the different diminution of PM and this means that when the EA implement one dimension of PM it caused increases other diminution.

5. Conclusion

The results of the present study indicates farmers believe that three component of PM have been employed more, and there is directly and a statically relation between three components. In addition the results show the EA believes PM is better than individual education. Therefore it is concluded that EA in Iran encourage greater farmers in PM and also, extension agent views participatory management as a viable style. The findings confirmed that higher qualification is important in PM. Therefore, AEE both individually and in teams, is a critical component of the new corporate strategy (Lawler, 1993; Ledford, 1993).

6. Recommendation

Considerably PM is a panacea for improving the AEE; this study suggests the application of the three components of participatory management for achieving AEE. Additionally achieve suitable strategy to plan for logical use of the agricultural resources and also use of skills, talents, farmers' professional knowledge and their cooperation in AEE. Finally, it is recommended that extension agents see PM style as a positive trend and not a threat to their authority. The correlation coefficient between the two dimensions such as trying to provide good condition for PM and considering values of PM were r = 0.79* which is considered as strong correlation. The level of coefficient was calculated 0.01.

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